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## *Partnerships key to success in Iraq reconstruction*

By DeDe Cordell  
Gulf Region Division



(Left to right) John Bass, team leader, Provincial Reconstruction Team – Baghdad, Maj. Gen. Michael R. Eyre, commander, Gulf Region Division, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Dr. Saber Al-Essawi, mayor of Baghdad, Maj. Gen. Jeffery W. Hammond, commander, Multi National Division – Baghdad; and Rear Adm. Kathleen M. Dussault, commander, Joint Contracting Command – Iraq each sign copies of the Memorandum of Understanding, signifying their commitment to partnership in all reconstruction efforts throughout the city of Baghdad.  
(U.S. Army photo by Sgt. Philip Klein, MND-B Public Affairs)

**Baghdad, Iraq** – The Coalition Forces marked a significant milestone in reconstruction efforts within the city of Baghdad Monday, as the city's leaders and those of several U.S. government agencies signed a Memorandum of Understanding to lay a solid foundation for all future partnerships.

The memorandum solidifies the partnership between the many agencies responsible for reconstruction efforts within the city of Baghdad, and spells out agreed-upon procedures and standards for each project, ensuring that everyone is working with a common understanding.



Maj. Gen. Michael R. Eyre, commander, Gulf Region Division, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, signs a Memorandum of Understanding with several other Coalition leaders and the mayor of Baghdad, which solidifies the partnership between the many agencies responsible for reconstruction efforts within the city of Baghdad, and spells out agreed-upon procedures and standards for each project. (USACE photo by Hussain Mahdy)

The signing ceremony included: Dr. Sa-ber Al-Essawi, mayor of Baghdad; Maj. Gen. Jeffery W. Hammond, commander, Multi National Division – Baghdad; Maj. Gen. Michael R. Eyre, commander, Gulf Region Division, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers; Rear Adm. Kathleen M. Dussault, commander, Joint Contracting Command – Iraq; and John Bass, team leader, Provincial Reconstruction Team – Baghdad.

“The importance of this understanding cannot be overstated,” said Essawi. “This will ensure a solid foundation of partnership beneath us – not just superficial – but really solid partnerships.”

Eyre highlighted the cooperative spirit and the many months of negotiations and

effort to make this agreement possible. “The key is what we do from this point forward,” he said. “We’re going to continue to enhance our working relationships, as – together – we support the needs of Baghdad and all of its citizens.”

Each of the signatories took a moment to discuss the significance of the partnership agreement, and their hopes for the future.

“There are still many challenges ahead,” said Hammond, “but I look forward to coming back in the future and looking at the splendor of one of the world’s greatest cities.”

"Communication and coordination are the most important facets for success," said Dussault.

John Bass added that each of these agencies and organizations have been working toward a common objective, "to assist the people of Baghdad." But, he said that now "we have the potential to do that in a coordinated fashion that truly reflects the needs and desires of the people of this city."

The memorandum is a significant development in the growing partnerships between the governments of Iraq and the U.S. It helps facilitate and streamline the entire process of project development, from start to finish, allowing the city leaders to develop a sense of ownership in the projects from the beginning. This, in turn, ensures the Coalition Forces turn over projects that are acceptable to the city of Baghdad.

**Note:** DeDe Cordell is the chief of public affairs with the Gulf Region Division, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Iraq. For more information, contact her at 540 665-5339 or email requests to [CEGRD.PAO@usace.army.mil](mailto:CEGRD.PAO@usace.army.mil). For more information on the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers in Iraq, visit [www.grd.usace.army.mil](http://www.grd.usace.army.mil).